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Mr. *Thacher's*
SERMON
On the DEATH of
Mrs. *GEE.*

MAN's *Frailty* practically exhibited
In his *Life* and *Death*.

A

SERMON

On the *Death* of that Virtuous
Gentlewoman

Mrs. *Sarah Gee*,

The amiable Consort of the Reverend

Mr. *Joshua Gee*,

Who died *July* 17. 1730.
In the *Twenty Ninth* Year of Her Age.

By *Peter Thacher*, M. A.
Pastor of a Church in *Boston*.

MARK XIII. 33.
Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is

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Man's *Frailty* practically Exhibited in his *Life* and *Death*.

PSALM XXXIX. 4.

Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is : that I may know how frail I am.

THE *Preacher* obſerves to us, That the Contemplation of DEATH is of great Advantage to Men. *Eccl.* 7. 2. *It is better to go to the Houſe of Mourning, than to the Houſe of Feaſting : for this is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart :* And he goes on, *v.* 3. *Sorrow is better than Laughter ; for by the ſadneſs of the Countenance the Heart is made better.* *Sermons* upon this melancholy Subject may be of general Advantage ; and are then eſpecially ſeaſonable, when the ſovereign, and awful Providence of GOD brings ſome remarkable Death into our Sight : a Death, which, either for the Character of the Perſon taken away, or the ſurprizing manner of Removal, ſtrikes very generally and very ſenſibly upon the Minds and Hearts of thoſe within the Obſervation of it. And ſuch an awful Providence has turned my Tho'ts to the Subject at this time ; as that upon which a few

few Meditations may be ſeaſonably and profitably employed.

The *Pſalms* are an excellent Collection of the wiſeſt Obſervations and Experiences tranſmitted to us under infallible Inſpiration. And this Pſalm particularly now before us contains the moſt weighty things that our Tho'ts can be exerciſed about, and of the moſt univerſal Concernment to mortal Men.

In the Verſe going before my Text, we find *David's* Heart raiſed to high Degrees of holy Affection and Warmth, by cloſe & ſerious *Meditation*; ſuch a View of the things he thought on as made them preſent, real, and weighty, and gave them Life and Power upon all the Paſſions: as you ſee in *verſ.* 3. *My heart was hot within me, while I was muſing the fire burned.*

My Text and the following Verſes inform us, what the weighty Subject was, that ſo cloſely employed him, and ſet him thus on fire; *viz.* Man's State, Life, and End as to this World; his Frailty and Mortality: and there are ſeveral very ſolemn things ſpoken upon this Subject, which muſt needs reach the Heart that would bring them home; but I may not ſtay to enlarge upon them.

He riſes in his Subject by a very elegant and beautiful Gradation, having his Paſſions and Imagination divinely warmed and enlivened. The *fifth verſe* begins with a very lively Metaphor; *Behold, thou haſt made my days as an hand-breadth*: but one ſhort Step, from the firſt Appearance in the World at his Birth, to his Diſappearance at Death. One would think, this ſhould reach the moſt ſenſeleſs; but leſt this ſhould leave too much room for a vain Opinion of the preſent State, he immediately adds, *It is as nothing.* He had brought it down contemptibly low before: Now he brings it to nothing; *mine age is as nothing before thee.* Take man in his very Top-circumſtances, which the World ever doth or can bring

him

him to, he is *altogether Vanity*. Man is *Vanity, altogether vanity*; Man *at his beſt State* is altogether ſo. Man's Life in his greateſt Glory and Advantages, internal and external, is ſo; a meer Dream and Appearance with Relation to *Time* and the *preſent World* ſeparately and abſtractly conſidered: This the Pſalmiſt muſt mean; for his very Prayer upon it makes it evident, he knew and thought it of infinite Importance in its Relations to *another World*.

From theſe Views and Contemplations he draws a very inſtructive practical Inference; *viz.* That they are vainly employed, whoſe principal End, and diſquieting Buſineſs it is to engroſs the World. *verſe* 6. *Surely every man walketh in a vain ſhew: ſurely they are diſquieted in vain: he heapeth up Riches, and knoweth not who ſhall gather them.*

But I return to the Words at firſt read to you: They are a very ſolemn and earneſt Prayer of an experienced Saint, for himſelf and his own moſt neneceſſary Good, when awakened into the cloſeſt Attention and Fervors; and the Things prayed for demand our moſt ſerious Attention, as Things very inſtructive to us. He was deeply concerned, when warm'd with the awful Subject, to make a true practical Judgment of his own *Frailty*. He prays to GOD for it, that He would move and enable him to make ſuch a Judgment. And as a Means to this practical Judgment of his Frailty, he prays, that GOD would make him to know *his End*, and the *Meaſure of his Days*, what it is. By his *End*, he intends his *Death*; the End of his Being upon Earth: And by the *Meaſure of his Days*, he means his *Life* in the World; his Continuance upon this Earth, and in this preſent State. He prays, that GOD, the Father of Lights, the Giver of Wiſdom, would give him ſuch a *Knowledge* of his *Life* and *Death*, as would bring him to make a true Eſtimate of his own *Frailty*; ſuch an Eſtimate as would be vital and effectual to the greateſt and beſt Ends.

THIS may be enough to open the Way to the *Doctrine.*

DOCT. *It is of the greateſt Importance for every one to obtain from GOD the true Knowledge of his preſent Frailty, by a true Knowledge of his End, and the Meaſure of his Days.*

I will give you my Meditations upon this general Truth, under the following Propoſitions.

I. *Every man, at his beſt State in this World, is a very frail Creature.*

II. *His End and the Meaſure of his Days, or his Life and Death, prove him frail.*

III. *'Tis of infinite Importance for every one practically to know theſe things.*

IV. *This true practical Knowledge can be obtained only from GOD.* He can ſhine into our Minds and give it: and none but He can.

I will give you a few ſhort Hints upon each of theſe in their order.

I. PROPOSITION. *Every man, at his beſt State in this World, is a very frail Creature.*

SINGLE out from among the vaſt Croud of Men, drawn together into one great Aſſembly, whom you will: Imagine he has all the Advantages in Concurrence and Union, that fallen Man is capable of in this world, conſiſtent with GOD's declared Purpoſes: And even concerning ſuch an one you muſt, upon a thorough Thought of things pronounce the Propoſition moſt evidently certain. I know the contrary Judgment is made, at leaſt practically, by the greateſt Number: they give a tranſient, haſty, unconcerned Glance at the Earth and Men upon it, and ſo miſtake. We are too often dazled with the falſe

Glare

Glare of ſome ſhining Circumſtances in the preſent State of the rich and great: we grow giddy, and cannot uſe our own Knowledge. While the deceitful Light ſtrikes ſtrong upon our Minds, we dream ſtrangely of worldly Good, and Reſt, and Happineſs. But now if we would allow our Minds, our Reaſon & Conſciences duly to attend to, and exerciſe themſelves upon the moſt expreſs Revelations of GOD, and upon what we ſee and feel every day, we could not be impoſed upon, nor miſled into contrary Sentiments, by any things in our own, or any other Perſons Circumſtances in the world; we could not poſſibly imagine, as they did of whom the Prophet ſpeaks, *Prov.* 18.11. *The rich man's wealth is his ſtrong City, and as an high wall in his own conceit*: We could not poſſibly imagine our ſelves, with the vain Dreamers, ſecure from Change and Harm; nor form ſuch Schemes of long Life and Pleaſure, and ſay with the Fool in the Parable, *Luk.* 12. 19. *Soul, thou haſt much goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry.* Would you but open your Eyes, and look attentively and with Care, you could not think as thoſe mentioned by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 49. 11. *Their inward thought is, that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations*; that ſhocking Declaration, *v.* 12. would awaken you out of this Dream, if you had fallen into it; *Nevertheleſs man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beaſts that periſh.*

We will illuſtrate the Point by an Inſtance. While we look upon the fine *Flower* opening to us in it's various Beauties, we would fain hope for Subſtance and Continuance: but a little time convinceth us of our Miſtake, and diſappoints our Hopes. So while we look upon the *Man* in his Maturity of Powers, ſupported with external Advantages, we can hardly help ſaying with ſome Confidence to our ſelves, Here is ſomething ſolid and abiding: but here too we are

miſtaken ; and a ſhort Run of Things and Time will oblige us to groan and weep out our Retractation. Attend to the Apoſtle in that moving Addreſs to you, *Jam.*4.14. *What is your life? It is even a Vapor. Life*, the Foundation of all worldly Hope, Action, Enjoyments, and Poſſibilities upon Earth, is a *Vapor* ; the moſt thin Appearance, a Phantom, a Shadow, next to nothing. That Paſſage deſcribes Man in a very true, but humbling Light, even then when he imagines himſelf upon immoveable Foundations, *Pſ.* 90.5,6. *Thou carrieſt them away as with a Flood* [ſuddenly and irreſiſtibly ; the utmoſt Skill and Strength are vainly oppoſed to the mighty Torrent] *They are as a Sleep* [almoſt before we know where we are, what we are doing, and where going, the great Change comes, the Amuſements of Time vaniſh, and we open our Eyes to the great Realities of the Eternal World : Once more] *In the morning they are like graſs which groweth up. In the morning it flouriſheth and groweth up ; in the evening it is cut down and withereth.* Graſs the choſen Emblem ! In its Nature very ſlender, and but ſhort liv'd in its whole Duration : But 'tis not Graſs in its natural Courſe that man is compared to, but Graſs ſubject to the Mower's Scythe ; flouriſhing in its Verdure and Strength in the Morning, till the fatal Scythe lays it upon the Ground, and the hot Sun takes away all its lovely Verdure, and changes it into a withered and Death-Hew before Night.

Every thing in Man's Perſon, State, Circumſtances relating to his preſent animal Being in this World, is in perpetual Change ; and gives many convincing Proofs of Weakneſs, Emptineſs, & Decay. The outward Supports of this animal Life periſh in our uſing them : We cannot eat and drink without their Conſumption. Our ſtrongeſt Garments ſoon wear out, and our moſt beautiful ones loſe their Figures and Colours, and grow unſightly and deſpicable. *Col.* 2. 22. *Which are all to periſh*

periſh with the uſing. Man's very Body wears away, and cannot continue without perpetual Recuits and Supplies. Conſtant New Repairs, by the uninterrupted Circulations and Labours of the proper Powers and Inſtruments in the Hands of the Almighty Creator, muſt keep it up in it's proper Form, and enable it to it's neceſſary Actions and Enjoyments. And this dear Maſs, our Bodies with all their various and exquiſite Texture, Order, and Workmanſhip, within a narrow Circle of Time grows uſeleſs and a Burden. Read the Preachers inimitable Deſcription of decaying Nature, and the Old Man's Approaches to Death; and you muſt be ſtupid and obſtinate to a Prodigy, not to ſee, and ſenſibly to own Man's Frailty. *Eccleſ.* XII chap. Small and weak things put his Bones out of Joint, and break them; wound his Fleſh, weaken his inward Springs, break the Texture of the Fluids, obſtruct and choke the Channels of Life. Little unobſervable things are too hard for the ſtrongeſt Conſtitution, oppreſs Nature, deſtroy the Beauty and Order of the Parts, break the animal Syſtem, and make the Man quite another Thing than he was but a few Days or Hours ago.

Nay, once more: To riſe as high in the Illuſtration as we can, take Man at his very beſt, when admired and envyed, and voted happy by all the carnal and tho'tleſs about him; yet even then the weakeſt things, commiſſioned by GOD the ſupreme uncontroulable Lord, will turn him out of himſelf; out of his Reaſon, Learning, Experience; nay, out of the very Principle of Self-preſervation. Oh! Feeble Creature! A Match for Nothing! A Prey to every Thing! *Job* gives us a very lively Idea of this Vanity and Frailty of Man upon Earth, *Job.* 4. 18, 19. *Behold, he put no truſt in his Servants; and his Angels he charged with Folly: How much leſs in them that dwell in Houſes of Clay, whoſe Foundation is in the Duſt.* A few weak and contemptible Inſects eaſily

ſap the Foundations, diſſettle and crumble down the Walls, *which are cruſhed before the moth.* That muſt be weak indeed which can be cruſhed, or defaced and deſtroyed by the Teeth or Weight of a Moth! But this brings me to my ſecond Head.

II. Proposition. *Man's* End *and the* Meaſure of his Days, *both his* Life *and* Death, *prove him frail.*

Both his Life and Death prove him contemptible, of no great Conſiſtence and Duration with regard to the preſent World. Let Men admire themſelves, and let others idolize them, as they will: yet if you open your Eyes to the Light, you cannot but ſee many Things both in Man's Life and Death, which will oblige you to own his Frailty. I will offer you a few Hints under the following Heads.

1. *Every man muſt dye.*

2. *Life at the longeſt is ſhort, and to us very uncertain.*

3. *Life is altogether out of our own Power, and ſubject to many Evils and Changes; which 'tis beyond us to foreſee, prevent, or deliver our ſelves from.* Something may be ſpoken to each of theſe.

1. *Every man muſt dye.* Death is unavoidable, 'tis univerſal: The Grave is the Common Houſe: The Generations of the Living deſcend into it one after another: And ſo they will and muſt do, while the World continues in its preſent State of Probation. *Job* 30.23. *I know thou wilt bring me to Death, and to the Houſe appointed for all the living.*

Multitudes live, indeed, as if they were to live always in this World. They do not, will not, cannot bear to think ſeriouſly upon Death: becauſe they are conſcious of an Unfitneſs for it; and it contradicts their preſent Inclinations and ſinful Intereſts, their carnal Quiet, Eaſe and Pleaſure, to

prepare

prepare for it. This ſort of Men do all they poſſibly can to keep out, and thruſt out, and keep at as great a diſtance from them as they can, the Tho'ts of this evil Day; the dark and dreadful Day of Death ||. But whether Men think of it, or no; Death purſues them, and will overtake them in the appointed Moment. Their thruſting it out of their Thoughts, puts it not a ſingle Moment further off.

THERE are no priviledged Ones, diſtinguiſhed by a Freedom and Exemption in this Point. Men are diſtinguiſhed one from another; and ſome have many Advantages above their Fellow Creatures, both internal and external, conſtitutional and accidental, natural and moral, common and gracious. Men are alſo diſtinguiſhed one from another in a great Variety of Ways, as to their going out of the World: But all are alike as to the great Change it ſelf. They are all frail, changing, decaying, haſting apace thro' the ſeveral Ages of Life to their Diſſolution; and many times ſome Violence by the way accelerates their Motion, and brings it on at once.

WE have the fulleſt Proof, that all the Diſtinctions and Advantages imaginable, that ſet one above another here, meeting in One Perſon could not poſſibly procure him an Exemption. Employ your Tho'ts a little upon the following Things; and they muſt entirely convince and ſatisfy your Minds in this Point.

'TIS the Sovereign Pleaſure of the ſupreme Lord, the Sentence of the juſt and ſupreme Judge, That all Men ſhall dye. Heb. 9. 27. *It is appointed unto Men once to dye.* This Decree hath been punctually executed in all Ages through the World: and the Execution of it is ſtill carried on every Day. We our ſelves ſee it by innumerable Inſtances, That Youth, Strength, Beauty, ſuperiour Powers, Knowledge, Learning, Uſefulneſs, Dignity, great Oppor-

|| Amos 6. 3.

tunities

tunities to do good, Eminent Stations in Church and State, and Faithfulneſs in employing them to the publick Good, will not ſecure any fromDeath. Nay, we ſee, That the Favour of GOD, vital Union to CHRIST, high Degrees of Grace, uncommon Meaſures of Holineſs, the moſt intimate Communion with GOD, a ſure Title to Immortality, the joyful Aſſurances, Beginnings and Earneſts of it, will not; none of theſe do exempt any. Conſider thoſe Words, *Pſal.* 49. 10. *He ſeeth that wiſe men die*; and that Paſſage of the Prophet, *Zech.* 1. 5. *Your Fathers, where are they? and the Prophets do they live for ever.* Where is *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, and Friend of GOD; whoſe ſtrong Faith ſacrificed his only Son, and Heir of the Promiſe, at GOD's Command? Where is *Iſaac*, who made GOD his perpetual Fear, and lived a long Life of intimate Communion with Him? Where is *Iſrael*, that Man of Prayer, that Prince with GOD by Prayer? Why, all are dead. Where are all the *Prophets*, that were raiſed up by GOD, lived, and propheſied in the ſeveral foregoing Ages, from *Moſes* down to this your Day? Why, they are all gone. Their Holineſs, their Intimacy with GOD, their being admitted to theKnowledge of His ſecret Counſels, and employed upon His ſpecial Errands and Buſineſs, did not ſecure them. They paſſed to their Reſt and Reward thro' the dark Valley and Gates of Death. What Proſpect then can remain for us? Surely none at all of eſcaping this Devourer.

Look upon your ſelves breathleſs Carcaſes without Senſe or Motion, ſhut up in a narrow Coffin and a dark Grave; and then you will own your ſelves frail Creatures. Such a Look would damp the rich Man glorying in his Riches, the ſtrong Man in his Strength, and the honourable in their Dignities: it would draw a dark and melancholy Veil over all our common Accompliſhments and Enjoyments. How

would

would it depreciate them all, to see all buried with our Carcases in the rotting Grave!

2. *Life at the longest is short, and to us very uncertain.* Frail Creature indeed! who must wear quite out and sink into Dust, within the narrow Compass of Threescore or Fourscore Years, if Nature be suffered to run out her whole Course. What a short space is this Life of Threescore or Fourscore Years, compared with vast Eternity; compared with the Capacity, Reaches, and Tendencies of Man's Soul; or to come lower, if we measure it by the Age of a *Methusalah*? Before we know how to act prudently upon the Stage, wisely to accommodate our selves to the Creatures about us in the World, & discreetly to enjoy our several Objects, we are snatch'd away and lose the Possession of them.

Far be it from the Heart of a Christian to expostulate with GOD, in any such rebellious Murmuring as that, *Psal.* 89. 47. *Wherefore hast thou made all Men in vain*? But yet there is a sound Sense in which these words may be taken: and so explained and qualified, they convey an elegant Description of humane Frailty and Vanity to us. Had we not Revelation, and the eternal World to relieve our busy Thoughts in this matter; Had such a Creature as Man, with such a Soul and such Capacity and Reaches to infinite and eternal Good, no other Relation but to Time, we should have been extremely in the dark; and it would have looked too much as if Man, even in the worst Sense, had been *made in vain*. You see his Limits, a narrow Space indeed for such a Creature, *Psal.* 90. 10. *The Days of our Years are Threescore Years and Ten.* Good old *Jacob*'s Life of One Hundred and Thirty Years is justly called a *short*, as well as an *evil* one.

But why do I mention Nature's Course? How few, very few comparatively are suffered to compleat that. How little Assurance have any of us, or any

any Men in the World, of compleating it! To ſpeak of the common Courſe of ſecond Cauſes, a Thouſand and Thouſand things ly in wait to ſnatch Life from us: But here we are to view all ſecond Cauſes, in Relation to GOD's ſovereign Pleaſure. They are His Inſtruments intirely: and GOD is pleaſed to uſe ſuch a Variety in the Diſpoſal and Government of Men, He acts with a Sovereignty ſo untraceable, that the wiſeſt can make no Judgment how long he ſhall live. And particularly 'tis very remarkable, that when Men, upon Strength of Conſtitution or any thing elſe, promiſe themſelves a conſiderable Duration, form large Schemes, and entertain diſtant Proſpects, Death comes with an amazing Suddenneſs; the dreadful Torrent hurries them down; they are gone out of ſight in a Moment, and all the Beholders are in utmoſt Terror and Conſternation.

The Meaſure of Life is moſt certain and immoveable with Relation to GOD, his fixed Decree and irreſiſtible Providence. We cannot ſtretch out Life an Hairs Breadth beyond the Bounds fixed by theſe eternal Boundaries. This is declared in the moſt plain and expreſs Terms, *Job* 14. 5. *His Days are determined, the number of his Months are with Thee: Thou haſt appointed his Bounds that he cannot paſs.* But tho' GOD hath appointed, and therefore certainly knows, the Number of every Man's Days; yet He hath reſerved this as a Secret in his own Breaſt; and hath not given any Signs whereby His ſovereign Pleaſure in this Point can be known. The certain Bounds of our Lives cannot be known by the Works of Nature and the things about us; by Conſtitution and the things within us, our own Frame and Make; by God's Providence, and the Courſe of His Adminiſtrations; nor by any Enquiries into the Bible, and His ſpecial Revelations to Men. We are in the dark, and ſhould be contented with our Ignorance

in

in this Point, as that which is wisely and mercifully ordered for us by GOD. And that Curiosity which pushes any on to thrust themselves into this Secret of GOD, is inexcusable Arrogance and Wickedness, as well as manifest Vanity and Folly. But I come to the next Head.

3. *LIFE is altogether out of our own Power, and subject to very many Evils and Changes.* Life is a Thing so very much above our Understanding, made up of so many Wonders, and such Wisdom, Power, Skill, perpetual Presence and Action are requisite to maintain it; that 'tis impossible in the Nature of Things for Man to be his own Preserver, or any meer Creature, even the wisest and strongest in Heaven or Earth. Neither will the Government of Men and the World, whereof the Disposal of Men is one grand Article, ever suffer it to be out of GOD's Hand, in the Hand of any Creature or Creatures.

The Keys of the invisible World are intirely in the Hands of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, His Father's King; and all Men die *when* and *as* He pleaseth: O happy Thought for his true Members! *Rev.* 1. 18. *I am he that liveth, and was dead: and behold, I am alive for evermore: Amen: and have the Keys of Hell and Death.* Deut. 30. 20. *He is thy Life.* Deut. 32. 39. *I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal.*

And Life is ever filled with many Evils and Changes, even to the most prosperous: they meet with enough, if they would wisely observe upon them, to keep alive a Sense, that our Rest is not, cannot, should not be in this World, upon Life and Creatures. *Job* 5. 7. *Man is born unto trouble, as the Sparks flie upwards.*

III. Proposition. *IT is of high and great Concernment, for every one to* know *these things: 'tis of infinite Importance for every one to* know how frail he

is; *by a true knowledge both of his* Life *and* Death.

In ſpeaking to this Propoſition I will briefly attempt Two Things.

1. *I will explain what this Knowledge is.* And

2. *Exhibit to you the Importance of it.*

1. I will explain, *What ſort of Knowledge the Pſalmiſt here pray'd for.* Surely he knew himſelf to be a frail Creature, a ſhort-liv'd-dying Creature. He could not be ignorant of the Miſeries, Uncertainty, Changes, and Troubles of Life: That after a few Years thus rolled away, the Soul would be ſeparated from the Body, Life would depart with the Soul, and the Body become a breathleſs, deformed, and loathſome Maſs of Corruption; intolerable to the deareſt Friends, and which they would be willing quickly to hide in the Earth out of their Sight: Our very Children, in their Minor Age and State, have gotten theſe things into their Minds, and know them with a literal Knowledge: He could not loſe the Idea of theſe things, while his Reaſon, Memory and Senſes were continued; while the Mind could receive, and the Memory hold any Truth at all, with a rational Conſciouſneſs and Reflection.

The *Knowledge* then that he was ſo ſolicitous, and prayed ſo earneſtly for, muſt be ſomething ſuperiour; ſome more excellent Kind of apprehending theſe Truths, than the meer common Conception of them is; a Knowledge bro't into the Soul by an Operation and Light let into it, inexpreſſibly above the common Light; a Light which makes the thing that was known before, the very ſame Truth for the Matter of it, look quite after another Manner.

Tis a ſort of Knowledge wherein the ſpecial Power and Energy of the HOLY enlightening SPIRIT appears and exerciſeth it ſelf; ſuch a Knowledge that Men, while they continue unrenewed, cannot have;

have; a Knowledge which, the Mind of an Apoſtate Creature muſt paſs under a Creating Change, before it can be received; a new viſive Power muſt be given, to receive theſe exalted, refined, powerful Ideas. Two Texts of Scripture I would recommend to your very ſerious Conſideration, in order to let in a general Light upon my Point. 1 *Cor.* 2. 4. *The natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of GOD, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* Col. 3. 10. *And have put on the New Man, which is renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of Him that created him.* But I deſcend to a more particular Deſcription and Explanation under the following Heads.

Part. 1. *Theſe things muſt be known with Relation to that Eternity we are paſſing into.* In our Bibles we certainly find our ſelves made for an *Eternity*, and bound to an *Eternity*. We are informed moſt diſtinctly, that Man hath an Immortal Soul, as well as a mortal Body; that there will be a Reſurrection of the Body, and a Re-union of Soul and Body, whereby the Man will be reſtored to himſelf, and become a Living Man. *Matth.* 6. 19, 20. *Lay not up for your ſelves treaſures upon earth, where moth and ruſt corrupt, and where thieves break through and ſteal. But lay up for your ſelves treaſures in heaven, where neither moth nor ruſt doth corrupt; and where thieves do not break through nor ſteal.* Luk. 20. 34, 35, 36. *The Children of this World marry and are given in Marriage: But they which ſhall be accounted worthy to obtain that World, and the Reſurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in Marriage. Neither can they dy any more; for they are equal unto the Angels.* Luk. 16. 9. *Make to your ſelves friends of the Mammon of unrighteouſneſs, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlaſting habitations.* We are taught, that as ſoon as Men die, their ſeparate Spirits immediately go into a State of extreme Torment, or of per-

fect Reſt and Enjoyment ; to Heaven, or to Hell. Luk. 16. 22. 23. *And it came to paſs that the Beggar died and was carried by Angels into Abraham's Boſom ; the rich Man alſo died and was buried. And in Hell he lift up his eyes being in Torments.*

And we know, that when GOD hath accompliſhed His Deſigns in and by this World, and the preſent State of things, the Stage will be taken down, and the Reſurrection-World ſhall open and commence. There ſhall follow the laſt great and moſt ſolemn Judgment of the whole rational World ; particularly of Mankind, both *raiſed* and *changed* : and the Judgment being paſſed upon Men, Soul and Body united, they will be ſent, the *Wicked* to remain for ever in Hell Torments with the Devil and his Angels, and the *Righteous* to be ever with the LORD in the Joys and Glories of the Heavenly Kingdom. *Joh.* 5. 28, 29. *The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the Graves, ſhall hear his Voice, and ſhall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the Reſurrection of Life, and they that have done evil, unto the Reſurrection of Damnation.* Theſe States are by a vaſt Variety of the moſt lively Metaphors, deſcribed in a manner the moſt moving, and even amazing and unintelligible to us : *Heaven* as the higheſt poſſible Good ; *Hell* as the extremeſt Miſery, intolerable and everlaſting.

ONCE more, Man's Life is revealed to us as Man's Time of Probation ; his working Time, and the Time of GOD's Treaty with Him. 'Tis the only Time wherein Man will enjoy the Means of getting out of that guilty enſlaved State which expoſeth him to Damnation, and getting into that State which will ſecure a happy Reſurrection : and the only Time for his walking in that Way of Faith, Repentance, and New Obedience, which will fit him for, and bring him to the Kingdom of Glory. *Eccleſ.* 9. 10. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy Might, for*

for there is no Work nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave, whither thou goest. Joh. 9. 4. *The night cometh when no man can work.*

And to shut up this Head; Man's Frailty, the Shortness and Evils of his Life, the Certainty of his Death, and the Uncertainty of the Time when he will die, are brought in and pressed as powerful Arguments to quicken us to the utmost Speed, Diligence and Care in laying out our Life after the best manner, with regard to this Eternity.

Thus, with these Relations, must we know and realize our Frailty, our End, and the Measure of our Days. Except we view them in this Light, and by thus viewing them are brought to suitable Tempers and Carriages in reference to GOD, our Souls, this World, and the next; the Knowledge will only torment and wound, imbitter Life and destroy all our Comforts. And the more realizing it is, the greater Evil and Misery will it be, and not a Blessing: to be prayed against, and not prayed for by us. But to come to the *Manner* of knowing.

Part 2. *We must know these things after such a manner as to have them real to us, and as it were present with us.* Our Frailty and Mortality must be so present with us, in our Minds and close Tho'ts, as those things are wont to be, which we look upon our selves interested in, and of great Concernment to us. Our Knowledge must not float in general and abstract Speculations, but must be brought home to our selves. The Case must be made our own; and kept before our Eyes, till the Idea becomes lively, enters into our several Powers, imprints it self upon them, and transforms them into it's Image, by giving them agreeable Impressions. No other Knowledge must content us: the Want or Absence of this distinct, self-applying, realizing Knowledge, makes the most weighty Truths, and of brightest Evidence, lose their Efficacy, and become dead and

useless

uſeleſs things; the Man is no more governed by them, than if they were not, nor ever had been perceived by him.

Part. 3. *Our Knowledge muſt be vital, affecting and practical.* The former Head leads to this, and (by the correſpondent Impreſſions of ſaving Grace, which always proportionably accompanies efficacious or ſaving Knowledge) will be followed with it. Our Frailty and Mortality muſt be brought to our Minds and Meditation and reſt there, ſo as by the Mind and Tho't to find the Way into our Conſciences; and by our Conſciences to bring and kindle a holy Fire in every Power of our Souls, in every Paſſion of our Hearts. Our Knowledge of theſe things muſt alſo engage us in a Courſe of ſuch Actions and Managements, (to live and lead ſuch a Life, I mean) as theſe awful Truths lead to, and for which they are propoſed to our Thoughts by GOD. They muſt be known and thought on, in ſuch a manner as will powerfully and effectually direct and quicken us to purſue the grand End of our Being, for which we were made and ſent into the World by GOD; and the End of enjoying a Day of Grace, and having the Knowledge and Offers of a CHRIST brought unto us. The trueKnowledge and Eſtimate of our time is ſhewn us in that Prayer, *Pſal.*90.12. *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſdom.* Then do we know aright, when our Knowledge brings us to live as becometh Men, who were ſent into the World to prepare for Judgment and Eternity; and who muſt hereafter have our eternal State calculated to our preſent Management. And till we come to this, we know nothing, as we ſhould, on this eaſy and common Subject. I come now to obſerve to you,

2. *That this Knowledge is of the greateſt Concernment.* And I will mention Three things which prove it ſo. 1. It is particularly ſerviceable to Mens getting

ting into a good and safe State. 2. To their living holy and good Lives in the World. 3. To their dying safely and joyfully; and living happily for ever.

1. *It hath a most sensible Tendency to awaken Sinners to get into the best State, with the wisest Haste.*

We are all by Nature in a dreadful Condition; *viz.* Slaves of Sin, and Heirs of Wrath. The Scripture every where represent us so: particularly the Apostle *Paul* is very express and affecting, in these humbling Truths. *Eph.* 2. 1. *You hath He quickened who were dead in Trespasses and Sins.* Rom. 3. 10. 19. *As it is written, There is none righteous, no not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after GOD. They are all gone out of the Way, they are altogether become unprofitable, there is none that doth good, no not one. Their Throat is an open Sepulchre, with their Tongues they have used deceit, the poison of Asps is under their Lips: Whose Mouth is full of Cursing and Bitterness: Their Feet are swift to shed blood, Destruction and Misery are in their Ways: And the way of Peace they have not known. There is no fear of GOD before their Eyes. Now we know, that what things soever the Law saith, it saith to them who are under the Law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the World may become guilty before GOD.* Rom. 8. 12. *The carnal Mind is enmity against GOD; for it is not subject to the Law of GOD, neither indeed can be.*

If we dye in this Condition of Sinfulness and Guilt, we are undone for ever; without the least glimmering Hope. If we dye in this dreadful State, we must lose all Good; be shut out of Heaven, and be thrust down to Hell, that dreadful Lake which burns with Fire and Brimstone for ever without ceasing; into the Hell of Hypocrites, and Unbelievers, where is the most intolerable Anguish and Torment. *Mat.* 8. 12. *The Childreu of the Kindom shall be cast out into outer Darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing*

gnaſhing of Teeth, Matth. 24. 51. *And ſhall cut him aſunder, and appoint him his portion with the Hypocrites: there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth.* Luk. 12. 46. *The Lord of that Servant will come and cut him aſunder, and will appoint him his portion with the Unbelievers.*

NOW, NOW is our Time to procure a Change of State; to obtain a Deliverance from that Sin and Guilt which thus expoſe us. GOD hath, by the Goſpel, in His infinite Mercy given us a precious Day of Grace, and opened a Treaty of Peace with His Rebels. If we hearken and comply with His Terms; we ſhall be received to Mercy, and find infinite Advantages. But we muſt remember that GOD, the Sovereign, hath ſet bounds to this Day. There will, Sinner, there will certainly be a laſt Call, a laſt Offer. This Day ſometimes ends before, but never ſtretches beyond the Bounds of Life: *There is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wiſdom in the Grave, whither thou goeſt.* Eccl. 9. 10.

Now right Thoughts of Death with it's Conſequences; and a true meaſuring of our Days, will awaken us to be in earneſt and make all poſſible Haſte to get out of a bad State, *viz.* a State of Nature, into a good State, *viz* a State of Grace. 'Tis the Man's being brought to ſee and realize himſelf in extreme Hazard, this alone, that will drive away carnal Security, and bring him to think, and pray, and take pains in the diligent Uſe of Means. Such is the natural Man's Antipathy to the great Buſineſs of his Soul, and another World, that nothing but extreme preſent Hazard livelily apprehended, will bring him to this: and the Thoughts I am ſpeaking of, are moſt powerful to this End. A Man under the Impreſſion of theſe Thoughts: *I muſt die, and for ought I know, before to morrow: I muſt be judged; and a Sentence of Eternal Happineſs or Eternal Miſery, in Heaven or Hell, will be pronounced upon me, according*

cording to the State in which I die, a good one or a bad one : I ſay, a Perſon with ſuch tho'ts will and muſt be without Reſt in a Chriſtleſs, graceleſs State. He will, he muſt be in earneſt and in an Agony, when he imagines, that he hears the dreadful Voice of the Judge, *Depart from me*, and ſees the Dreadful Flames juſt ready to ſeize upon him. He cannot quietly ſleep, and madly ſport as heretofore, in ſuch Circumſtances. *Now*, when ſuch Thoughts come ; you'l hear him with Tranſports crying out, *What ſhall I do ?* You'l find him upon his knees : You'l find him with his Bible in his hand : You'll find him in GOD's Houſe : You'll find him in Company of the godly and experienced Chriſtian, trembling at the Tho'ts of his former Company and Converſation. Thus the right Knowledge of our Frailty is a Remedy for the worſt of Diſeaſes ; Carnal Security.

2. *It will awaken us to live an holy Life* : Such a Life as GOD requires ; a Life wherein we ſhall beſt conſult and provide for our grand Intereſts in the other World.

You all know and own, that it is of the higheſt Neceſſity, to live and act in our whole Courſe, as ſuch Creatures of GOD ſhould live and act ; as Creatures ſo conſtituted, ſo endowed, ſo related, ſo priviledged, ſo bound by Oath and Promiſe ſhould live and act. Now ſuch Thoughts of our Frailty as have been mentioned, ſuch a Knowledge, conſtantly preſent ſo as to keep up an holy Warmth in us, muſt quicken us conſtantly to live according to GOD's perfect Will, to his Honour : To live, I mean, a Life of Faith in GOD, and in the LORD JESUS CHRIST ; a Life of Goſpel Repentance and Obedience, denying our ſelves, taking up our Croſs, and following our Redeemer, his Laws, and Example : To live as the Stewards of GOD, under his Eye and accountable to Him : To manage our ſelves with a diſintereſted Zeal and Faithfulneſs in our Stations, for the

Good of the Societies we are related to; with a holy Moderation to the World: And to conclude, to live so as best of all to fit our selves for the approaching eternal State: following the Preachers wise Advice, fore-cited, *Eccl.* 9. 10; and following the Apostle's excellent Example, 1 *Cor.* 5. 9, 10. *We labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of CHRIST, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

3. *This Knowledge of our Frailty will greatly contribute to your dying safely and comfortably, and living happily for ever.*

He that lives, as you have heard under the foregoing Head, must die *safely*; the Curse and Sting of Death being removed from the Death of such an one. Every such Person is united to CHRIST, and cannot be disunited; no, not by Death it self, which makes so many other sad Separations. He is Interested in the Promise: and that secures to him not only Salvation from Hell, when he dies, but the Possession of Heaven; a Crown and Kingdom, Rivers of the purest Joys and Pleasures for evermore: It secures to the happy Man a Partnership with the SON of GOD himself (the Heir of all things) in the Inheritance of all things, particularly of Heavenly Glory. The Apostle in the cleerest manner confirms your Faith in these Truths and Priviledges. 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. *O Death, where is thy Sting?* Rom. 8. 38, 39. *I am perswaded, that neither Death nor Life----shall be able to separate us from the Love of GOD, which is in CHRIST JESUS our* LORD. 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22, 23. *All things are yours--whether--the world or Life or Death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours: And ye are CHRIST's, and CHRIST is GOD's.* Rev. 14. 13. *Write, Blessed are the Dead which die in the* LORD. Thus it appears how the Thoughts of your

your Frailty, by helping you to live godlily, will help you to die ſafely.

And to conclude this Propoſition: This is alſo the beſt and moſt likely way to die *comfortably* and *joyfully*. In this way the King of Terrors lays down his ghaſtly and frightful Form, and appears pleaſant and ſmiling. If you grow familiar with Death by ſuch a practical, vital Knowledge, you may behold him as a Friend; for he certainly is ſo. You may willingly reſign your departing Spirit into the Hands of your Covenant GOD, Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; and lay down your Bodies in the Duſt, in certain Expectation of a joyful Reſurrection, to go and be with CHRIST, in Poſſeſſion of infinitely better Things than any we can poſſibly have here in this World. Thus I have ſpoken to the third Propoſition: I come now to the Fourth which I will paſs thro' very briefly.

IV. PROPOSITION. *This true practical Knowlege of our Frailty can be obtained only from GOD.*

You think it the eaſieſt and moſt obvious, the moſt thoroughly known, eaſily and univerſally believed: And ſo indeed it is in the literal common Knowledge and Belief. 'Tis as eaſy as any Truth, which the Mind can be exerciſed about; to underſtand the Meaning, and to believe the Certainty and Reality of this Propoſition, That Man by Sin is become a frail Creature, of ſhort Life, and poſting to Eternity. This complex Propoſition or Truth, with the others which you have heard the Scripture hath joined with it, is ſoon known and credited, even by Children themſelves. It is ſo very evidently ſhewn us by the Word and Providence, and by our own Feeling in a Thouſand Changes and Pains in our Bodies, and Aſſaults upon Life; that we cannot but know

and believe it, if we will think at all about it: We must be stupid and ignorant and sottish beyond imagination, not to know and believe it in this Manner: The common Concourse of the Creator with our Minds will bring us to this Knowledge.

But the *Manner* the Psalmist prays for, and which is so necessary and profitable; tho' it takes into it the common Knowledge, yet it is a Manner of knowing and believing so much above the common, that it is entirely beyond the Power of Man over himself, beyond humane Teaching and Reasonings, and all the Light and Fire of the plainest Descriptions, and the livelier Metaphor.

Notwithstanding all the moving things upon this Subject, in the Scriptures, in Providence, in awakening Sermons, and their own Feeling, Men will live like Brutes, without any Sense of Death and Judgment and Eternity, of Heaven and Hell, and of the great Business GOD hath given them to do in the World. They *do* live so, till the SPIRIT of GOD enters their Minds and Consciences, by his victorious Light and powerful Impressions. Then, and not before, they see and realize, they realize and tremble, they tremble and fly from the Wrath to come, they make haste to the only SAVIOUR and Refuge, and take pains, in GOD's way, to lay up a good Foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold upon Eternal Life. *Jam.* 1. 5. *If any of you lack Wisdom* (this Wisdom, in special, to number our Days aright) *let him ask of* GOD. The inspired Psalmist did so in my Text; and the holy Man of GOD in that Prayer, *Psal.*90.12. *So teach us to number our Days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*

Thus I have passed the Doctrinal Part, and come to the APPLICATION. The

I. USE

I. USE may be of *Information* in ſeveral Particulars.

1. *We may hence wonder at the Folly of Mens putting far from them the Day of their Death.* Multitudes do ſo: they will not, they dare not think of the dreadful Time: they do all they can to keep it at a Diſtance: they keep out of the way of this Tho't as much as poſſible: when thruſt upon them by GOD's ſetting home ſome Word or Providence, they will not bear the melancholy Subject, and drive it out as faſt as they can. What do you mean? Do you imagine you can put off Death by this? Or do you imagine you can duly prepare for it, without ſerious Tho'ts of it? Oh! No. Oh! No. If you go on in the reſolute ſtifling theſe ſerious Tho'ts, becauſe they diſturb you in your preſent Courſe, within a few years you'l bitterly lament it as an infinite Folly. The Time haſtens, when Reaſon and Conſcience will tell you, (and ſting you too with the upbraiding Reflexion,) that it would have been infinitely better to have endured all the Fears and Diſquietude, that the melancholy Tho't could have given you, than to have loſt your Day of Grace and your Souls for ever, by the neglect of it and oppoſition to it.

2. *Hence then, think ſeriouſly of it; Delay in the Buſineſs of your Souls, is a very great Evil:* a plain, vile, bold Contempt of GOD, in the ſolemn Warnings and Calls He gives you *Not to delay*, and in the Offers of Grace which He now makes you. He gives you the moſt convincing Proofs of your Frailty and Mortality. He now ſays to you; *I will be your God, Saviour, Sanctifier: I will juſtify, ſanctify, and adopt you, take you into my Family, take care of you as Children in the World, and give you Childrens Portions when you die: Only now hearken and believe, hearken and repent, hearken & turn. Remember my Calls reach*

no farther than Life: all your Opportunities die with you, and you are very frail: you find Life running out apace, the Glass will soon be empty, and you may die to morrow.

When GOD says, *To Day*, and you say, *To morrow*; you trample upon his Warnings with infinite Presumption, and slight His Offers with the very blackest Ingratitude: You hazard your losing of Heaven, and suffering the Pains of Hell-Fire. You disobey GOD, who says, *To Day*; and practically say to Him, that His Blessings, (the Blessings that His Son died for, and He hath opened His Covenant, and sent His Spirit and Gospel for) are not worth so much Haste. Think of these things and blush, O Delayer: Think of these things and tremble, and reform; lest your bold Delays should immediately procure the dreadful Word, *Cut it down.*

3. *Hence we should infer the Folly of Slothfulness and Mispence of Time, and the Wisdom of Diligence and redeeming the Time.* You have heard of your Frailty; how little a time you have to live; that Death will come, and you don't know how soon. What Folly is it then to trifle away Life in pursuing Vanity and Sin. You know you have a great Work to do; and, if you are wise, you may make every Moment turn to the best advantage: Your Souls may be greatly enriched, and you may carry over vast Treasures to Heaven; by numbring your Days so as constantly and diligently to lay out Time in *present Duty*, with an Eye to the Will of GOD, the Honour of GOD, and your future eternal Happiness. Hearken to the Apostle's Advice, *Eph.*5.15,16. *See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the Time.*

4. *Hence they are greatly to blame, who are sinfully surprized by the Death of dear Relatives.*

By *sinful Surprize*, I mean being driven into sinful Discontent and Murmuring, over-born by an Excess

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of Sorrow, unfitted for Duty, and rendred incapable of Comfort and Enjoyment by the Death of ſome dear Relative. When you are even amazed at the Stroke; as if you had never tho't of it, nor prepared for it; as if you did not know whence it came, nor for what; as if there were no Support nor Relief in the Caſe, but things were deſperate: Surely this is greatly to be blamed. You could not imagine your lovely Ones out of the Reach of Death, not ſubject to the ſame Frailty with their Fellow Mortals. Did not GOD always give you Tokens enough to keep your Minds awake and attentive, and your Hearts and Affections in a ſuitable Poſture to receive ſuch Diſpenſations? Let us mourn for our ſinful Exceſſes on theſe mournful Occaſions, and always watch our Affections, and accept of that Advice, *Phil* 4. 5. *Let your Moderation be known to all men.*

5. If Man is ſo frail as you have heard, *then they are happy Men who are duly prepared for Changes & Death.* There are the ſure unfailing Means for us to avoid the Miſchiefs of ſuch a frail, mortal State as our Apoſtacy hath brought us into; and of making them ſerviceable to bring forth a Good infinitely greater than our Frailty is an Evil. There is a certain way wherein Affliction ſhall produce Joys, the pureſt and moſt durable; and Death will be an Inlet to Eternal Life, in the full Enjoyment of God. 2 *Cor.* 4. 17, 18. *Our light Affliction which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory; while we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen: for the things which are ſeen are but Temporal; but the things which are not ſeen, are eternal*: Rev. 14. 13. *Bleſſed are the dead which die in the LORD.* There is an *habitual* and *actual* Preparation revealed & commanded by GOD, for preventing theſe Evils, & obtaining this Good by Affliction and Death. And they are certainly the happy Men, who are, by Grace, got into this prepa-

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redState, & daily proceed in a Courſe of Preparation. They that are got into a State of Grace,& live in the diligent Exerciſe of it, need not be oppreſſed with the Approach of any Evil; but may entertain themſelves with the Songs of the LORD in the Houſe of of their Pilgrimage: When Evils come, they may ſee GOD,& His Love & Grace in them; and may be ſure, they ſhall work well, and end well. Their Condition is given us in *Pſal.* 73. 24, 25. *Thou ſhalt guide me with Counſel, and afterwards receive me to Glory. My Fleſh and my Heart faileth: but GOD is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever.* When Death appears, and would affright; they may ſee Glory and Immortality juſt by, and be in a Condition to comply with that Advice, *Luke* 21.18. *When theſe things begin to come to paſs, then look up and lift up your Heads; for your Redemption draweth nigh.*

II. USE. Of *Exhortation.* Upon what we have heard, *let us be very diligent in the Uſe of all proper Means to get this Knowledge into our Conſciences, Hearts and Lives.* Pray hard, and Labour hard. Let us reckon our Knowledge of our ſelves, (of our Frailty, I mean) among our moſt profitable Knowledge; and wiſely wait upon GOD in the Uſe of all his Means for obtaining of it.

The happy Fruits of this Knowledge will infinitely more than compenſate for all the inward Anxiety, Labour and Struggle we muſt paſs thro' to obtain it: andGOD muſt be owned to be theAuthor, and waited upon in His own Way.

Let me in a Word direct you; To read ſeriouſly and with Application, what He hath written in your Bibles upon this Subject: To hear what He ſpeaks by His Miniſters: And to accuſtom your ſelves to wiſe Obſervation and Meditation upon the Subject. But to conclude all with two or three Things.

In the First place: *Let us wisely observe our own Decays and Approaches to Death.* I don't know any One in the World, but if he would set himself to remark, might find many Warnings from himself; his own Sufferings and Decays. Every Sickness and Pain comes to you from GOD with that Message; *Remember you must die*; Every Decay upon your Powers is an Approach to Death, and a Monitor to you. Wisely observe and improve this, and you'l find the great Advantage of it.

In the next place: *Let us improve remarkable Instances of Mortality.* Let the Instances which are remarkable, either for the Character of the Persons removed, their near Relation to us, or the Circumstances of their Death, be duly tho't of, and applied to our selves; to bring us to this realizing, vital and practical Knowledge of our own Frailty.

In such a Town as this, we see the frequent Triumphs of Death, in the Funerals of every Day: in the Course of the late Sickness, we have seen many in a Day. These must be remarked and improved; and upon every Funeral we should seriously and feelingly say to our selves, *It must be my Turn, and how soon I don't know. Am I ready for the awful Hour?*

But there are dark Hours, when GOD removes lovely Husbands and Wives, dear and delightful Children, pleasant Brethren & Sisters, faithful Friends, and useful Neighbours: *Now* the Voice is loud indeed to us; Death comes very near us. These Instances awaken Grief and Anguish: and we should turn it into a spiritual Channel, realize by these affecting things our own Frailty, and be quickened by them in our own thorough and effectual Preparation for Death and the important Consequences of it.

And particularly we have of late seen an Instance of such a Death, which Providence calls us to have our Eyes upon, and our Hearts deeply moved with. The lovely Person I speak of, is Mrs. Sarah Gee

the virtuous Conſort of the Reverend and Worthy Paſtor of this Church. GOD loudly ſpeaks to us all, who knew and were acquainted with her; eſpecially to the diſtreſſed Husband and Relatives: He ſpeaks moſt important things, and convinceth us of the Uncertainty of Life, and of the Vanity of our moſt uſeful and lovely Relatives. Such a Death hath an uncommon Tendency to draw the Eye, fix the Tho't, and ſtrongly move the Soul of every thoughtful Beholder, and of the mourning Relatives peculiarly: as the ſtrongeſt Motives of Eſteem & Affection united in her while living; and of the deepeſt Grief, now the Holy GOD hath removed her by Death.

She was Daughter of the Reverend Mr. Nathanael Rogers, the late excellent Paſtor of the Church of Christ in *Portſmouth*, *New-Hampſhire*; and honourably deſcended from Anceſtors of Superiour Rank among us: and She was truly worthy of ſuch Progenitors; her Character and Carriage roſe up to ſuch a Deſcent.

GOD her Maker gave her a very comely Body; but a much more lovely & beautiful Soul. The GOD of Spirits formed her into an exact Agreeableneſs to the Station he aſſigned her, & to the Part ſhe was to act upon the Stage of Life; to make her a ſingular Bleſſing & Delight. He gave her a large & well furniſhed Mind, and an excellent Diſpoſition, cultivated by the beſt Education and great Induſtry, but raiſed and animated above all by the Redeemer's Image. From theſe Principles ſhe lived a long Life in a few Years, the Object of high Eſteem, Love, and juſt Imitation; as a Child, a Wife, a Mother, a Friend, a Neighbour, and, which includes all, a Chriſtian: and She is now removed with equal Grief.

Here is a very lively Image of Humane Frailty; and our Hearts muſt needs ſwell & flow at the affecting Sight: Here the Motives to the wiſeſt Improvement of Life and Talents riſe high, and ſhould deeply impreſs us.

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We cannot wonder to see the Persons nearly related mourning bitterly such a Loss, and the awful Frown of their Heavenly Father in it. —— But, yet remember to temper your Grief with the fundamental Faith and Hope of Christianity; A joyful Resurrection, and the happy Meeting then at the Right Hand of CHRIST. You should moderate your Sorrows with these Thoughts; That tho' She lived too little a while for your Advantage and Delight, and the Education of the dear Children; yet the Wisdom of a sovereign heavenly Father set the Bounds of her Continuance: and She lived long eno' to do His Work faithfully, and to get ready for His Joys; which She is now in the full Possession of. Thus you may lament your distressing Case: but I will conclude by observing to you, That the holy *Use* of such Providences is the grand Business, the highest Wisdom and Duty.

Let us all be quickened by this Death to the great Business of Life; Preparation for our own dying Hour. Then as we have served GOD, together with our departed Friends, a few Years in this World, we shall serve Him in Perfection together, without Separation for ever.

In the last place: *Let us wrestle in the most fervent Prayers, for that Grace which is requisite for our selves and one another, in order to make such Improvements*: And particularly for the Persons wounded by this Death; the desolate Husband, orphan Children, distressed Mother, and mournful Brethren. Piety to GOD, and the most lovely Charity to Men, demand such things: and in the Practice of them we shall honour GOD, find a most precious Balm for our wounded Spirits, and reap the most wonderful Advantages.

FINIS.